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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Declassified Case: NW# 78134 Date:
08-25-2025

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with
Russian President Putin

PARTICIPANTS: President Putin

Interpreter: Peter Afanasenko

Notetakers: Randall Labine, Frank Kersten,
Chris Davis

DATE, TIME: October 22, 2007, 7:15 - 7:45 a.m. EDT
AND PLACE: Oval Office

President Putin: Hello? (U)

The President: Vladimir. (U)

President Putin: Hello? (U)

The President: Hey, Vladimir. (U)

President Putin: Hello, George? (U)

The President: Yeah. (U)

President Putin: Hello, George. I'm very glad to hear your
voice. (U)

The President: Good. How are you doing? (U)

President Putin: I'm doing fine. I wanted to call you to tell
you about my trip to Iran. (U)

The President: Thank you. (U)

President Putin: If you do not mind, I'll start with that.
Sorry for taking the initiative. (U)

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(The President: Please, thank you. (U)

President Putin: Well, first of all, I should tell you this work we have done is very useful. I had an opportunity to talk extensively with Ahmadinejad and the religious leader. The talks were rather serious. We confirmed once again that our position is based on the coordination agreed upon within the "Six." We confirmed once again and underscored that Iran has to stick to its obligations in the field of non-proliferation. We once again said Iran must fix its relationship and resolve all its issues with the IAEA and stop uranium enrichment. I recollect talking with you in Kennebunkport and I remember you and Condi's reaction when I told you of our fuel supplies to Iran. Bearing in mind your views and the views of the Israelis, I have introduced certain corrections on this matter. So we confirmed that we will finalize the construction of Bushehr, and I confirmed we will fulfill our commitments on uranium supplies. But, I said this will be done only after certain amendments to the contract. We didn't set any time frame for the fuel supplies, we just said we will do them in portions. (S)

(You should know that before my visit to Iran, I sent Primakov -- our former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister -- and he delivered our position to the Iranians, which means that they should impose a moratorium on uranium enrichment before we continue talks. We also had a discussion with the religious leader of Iran. In fact, this meeting was witnessed by the President of Iran and all religious authorities and civil leaders of the country. While their view is rather known, their motivation is that they have a right to a peaceful nuclear technology and a peaceful enrichment of uranium. I confirmed on my part, we understand that, and our view on the rights of Iran is the same. But I highlighted two things that make the talks difficult. I should tell you I did so, rather bluntly and openly, in the presence of all who were there. (S)

(So, the first point I made was that they have an excessive position on Israel. It is a radical position, which is higher than the average Arab position on Israel, including the Palestinians themselves, by the way. Well of course, they cannot be more Palestinian than the Palestinians themselves. This was the first point. So the second point was those large scale plans Iran has to create new units of nuclear power plants. Of course, I admitted their right to build new units, and said I am prepared to continue our cooperation. But, I mentioned that Bushehr is being constructed by us for the last

(10 years already. Even assuming other units might be built faster, this will still require years and years of detailed work. But, enrichment is being done by them already, and they are stockpiling that. So, the question of everyone is, "Why would they be doing so?" To tell you frankly, I did not expect a positive response on their behalf. But still, there is some aspect which is positive. When we started to talk with the religious leader, he said they would not stop uranium enrichment. But then later, he said they would think about our position and ideas. Well, this is how our talk with him unfolded. But I won't be able to communicate in this phone call the details and emotional flavor of how this went. (S)

(But, what was brought by Primakov to me after his visit to Iran contains one important moment. The Iranians are asking themselves, if they made certain steps, would the Americans start bilateral talks with them? And there is another point. I would like to encourage positive parts of the dialogue. We managed to hear something positive from the Iran side. I am planning to send Lavrov to Tehran once again for the purpose of hinting other reasons to them of our continuing discussion. Because in our view they can find a way out of the situation, and to a certain extent, be claiming some victory. And they can say they managed to reach all goals with regards to research. This is the first point. The second point is they are expecting to get uranium from Russia for Bushehr, and they will do so. So, the third point is that when they need new uranium in the future for new power plants they can do so, but in the meantime, they could stop this practical work in uranium enrichment. (S)

(Condi has been traveling too, I know. That is why Minister Lavrov has not been able to contact her to discuss these details. But soon he will do so. And we should stay in touch, too. It is very important that the work of the IAEA is maintained with them and capture the positive work of Javier Solana. This is actually all I wanted to tell you about Iran. (S)

The President: Thank you. First of all, when I talk to people in the U.S., I tell them that an Iran that has the capacity to make a nuclear weapon would be very dangerous. (S)

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(The President: Hey, Vladimir, sorry. I tell people here that you are concerned about their uranium program like I am. This conversation reinforced my beliefs. Secondly, I appreciate very

(much the strategy of calling their bluff. Saying, if you want a civilian program, fine, you can have one, but, we, and I mean Russia, and other countries will provide the uranium and collect the uranium. Thirdly, I think it is important for the Iranians to understand that if they verifiably suspend their uranium enrichment programs they will be able to talk with us but through the U.N. process -- or, not the U.N. process, but the P5 plus one. In other words, that would be the beginning of a process. We've got years of distrust, or mistrust to overcome. Over time, suspension and the beginning of multilateral talks could evolve into something different. Now it is very important in the meantime to keep up the pressure. It's very important for us, through the U.N., to remind the Iranian leaders that there is a consequence for their seeming intransigence. Let me ask you a question. Larijani quit the other day. We view him as the most reasonable person in a group of relatively unreasonable people. How did you interpret his departure? (S)

(President Putin: To us, it was absolutely unexpected. Because I also believe he was a person one could talk to. To us it is not clear what is happening there. I believe this is some sort of a loss, because he was very particular and very knowledgeable and he seemed to be looking for some solutions. Let's wait and see who takes over. To us it is unexpected. (S)

(The President: We'll keep in touch. Thank you for your information, and I appreciate the way you handled it. Thank you very much for receiving Gates and Condi. They were both positive about the meetings. (S)

President Putin: Actually, I enjoyed my talk with them because I felt a real desire to find some acceptable solutions. Nothing dramatic, but a desire to look for some ways out. And this is true for the ballistic missile defense system and the CFE treaty. The Secretary of Defense seems to be a person of a particular approach because he managed to formulate some modest, but reasonable ideas we would like to think over. (S)

The President: I think it's important before you and I leave office that we put in place a series of understandings that will allow the leaders who follow us to have good and cordial relations. Obviously the agreements have to be good for both countries. But, I think we have an opportunity with this missile defense deal and CFE, before you leave office. To me, that would be a very good legacy for our relationship. (S)

(President Putin: I fully share your view, George. (S)

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The President: Just one other point before you go. Now is not the time to discuss it. I'm very aware of a conversation you had with the Israeli Prime Minister. At some point in time, if we can find a secure line, I'd like to discuss it with you. I'm interested in your thoughts. I'll leave it at that. (S)

President Putin: He told me he had already informed you of what he was going to tell me. The information he delivered was a surprise to us because we didn't have that before. Absolutely, not even a single hint on that. Very pitiful and alarming situation. (S)

The President: Yeah. Hope you are doing well and thank you for the phone call. (U)

President Putin: Thank you. Well, I am sure we need to keep in touch. (U)

The President: Absolutely. (U)

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President Putin: And I share your attitude on how we should be organizing our relations, regardless of what's on paper, though of course it would be better if we have something on paper. And, of course, I hope to have an opportunity to meet with you again before I leave office in the Kremlin. (S)

The President: We'll work that out. I told them at the press conference, you were very wily, cagey. People are wondering what your plans are, and I said, "That's my friend Vladimir. He's keeping everyone guessing." (S)

President Putin: Well, George I feel you have a very good mood today, which is really pleasing. I would like to wish you such good moods in the future. (S)

The President: Thank you. (U)

| President Putin: Good bye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --